

Five Ways to Help Your Child Develop Positive Self-Esteem

Developing positive self-esteem is important for all kids and helps them feel capable and valuable. Parents can help their children develop positive self-esteem by praising their efforts and helping them recognize and use their strengths. Below are 5 ways you can help children build their self-esteem.



1. Open up dialogue and be a role model.

Talk to your child about topics you find challenging and must work to overcome. It's good for your child to hear you talk about your own strengths, while also acknowledging your weaknesses.

2. Provide clear feedback, but don't be overly critical.

It can be difficult to talk to kids about habits or behaviors that need improvement. But addressing those topics clearly can help your child develop self-esteem. Positive self-esteem comes from working hard toward a goal. It is always good to develop a specific goal that your child can work towards. For instance, instead of saying "Why do you always leave your clothes in such a mess?" you can say, "Your clothes are not folded. You can play after you fold your clothes and put them away."

3. Help foster a growth mindset.

Help your child reframe negative thoughts and statements. Kids with a growth mindset believe their abilities can improve over time. (As opposed to kids with a fixed mindset, who think their abilities are set and they cannot improve, no matter how hard they try.) For example, your child might say, "I can't read that. It's too hard." You can respond by saying, "Yes, reading is hard for you, and you can't easily read it yet. Let's come up with a plan to get better at it."

4. Teach children that mistakes are learning experiences.

When your child knows that it's OK to fail and there are solutions to mistakes, it can help build self-esteem. Help your child find the "next time you can" in her mistakes. For example, you could say, "Yes, you spilled the juice. Next time you're pouring the juice, you can hold your glass over the sink."

5. Praise your child's approach and efforts.

It's important to praise your child, but *how* you praise your child matters, too. Rather than just focusing on the result, praise the method used by your child. By acknowledging the approach kids take to tackling challenges, you help them learn that they are capable of overcoming obstacles. You could say, "Your hard work on practicing the piano really shows when you play that song. I know it was tough at first, but it was good to ask the piano teacher for advice."

Source: Content modified from <https://www.understood.org>